Anti-AIDS drug

2704. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Health Organization has approved anti-AIDS drug manufactured by one of India's leading pharmaceutical companies for supply to the U.N. Agency;

(b) whether this anti-AIDS drug is easily available in the country; and

(c) the other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir. Three anti-AIDS drugs—Zidovudine, Lamivudine and Nevirapine, manufactured by two Indian pharmaceutical companies namely, Cipla Ltd. and Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd. have been approved by WHO.

(b) These drugs are easily available in the country also.

(c) In addition to above drugs, generic manufacture of the following drugs is also being made in the country. There are: Stavudine, Didanosine, Efavirenz, Saquinavir, Indinavir, Ritonavir and Nelfinavir. Government have exempted all the above anti-retroviral drugs from excise duty in order to make them affordable to HIV/AIDS patients.

Anti-retroviral drug Nevirapine is being used for prevention of Mother To Child Transmission in our country. Besides, these drugs are also being administered for post exposure Prophylaxis among health care workers in public sector hospitals in the event of an accidental needle stick injury while treating HIV/AIDS patients.

Ban on gutkha and pan masala

2705. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a few State Governments including Tamil Nadu Government have already banned gutkha;

(b) if so, the names of the State Governments which have requested the Centre to ban gutkha and pan masala;

(c) the action taken on such requests;

(d) whether according to a survey, 10-40 per cent school students